

Final Grand design laid out

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El Mirage and Sun City will play host to a pair of public meetings Dec. 2 when the Arizona Department of Transportation will display the final design for the upcoming Grand Avenue widening project.

Drivers and community members will have a chance to comment on the plan for the widening between Loop 303 and 99th Avenue at afternoon and evening sessions.

The Sun City meeting will be from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. in the Sundial Recreation Center, 14801 N. 103rd Ave. From 6 to 7:30 p.m., the plans will be on display at Surprise Elementary School, 12907 W. Greenway Road in El Mirage.

A brief presentation about the project will take place 30 minutes after the start of each meeting, followed by an open house where community members can view maps and displays about the project. Representatives from the ADOT design team will answer questions during and after the formal presentation.

Grand Avenue is scheduled to be widened to six traffic lanes (three lanes in each direction) between Loop 303 and 99th Avenue. Construction is expected to begin in 2009 and be completed in 2011.

ADOT officials said to minimize the need for additional right of way, widening is planned to occur primarily within the existing median. The project includes improvements at signalized intersections, but no grade separations (underpasses or overpasses).

The feasibility of constructing grade separations in certain locations is being conducted as part of a separate study, ADOT officials said.

For more information about the meetings or improvements, or to arrange for special accommodations at the meetings, contact the Northwest Valley Community Outreach Team at 480-890-3055 or projectupdate@lewin-associates.com. Comments on the project may also be sent to Brock Barnhart, c/o Northwest Corridor Community Outreach Team, 1146 N. Mesa Drive, Suite 102-298, Mesa, AZ 85201.

Community members are encouraged to sign up for ADOT's Grand Avenue mailing list at www.ValleyFreeways.com to receive news and construction alerts about the project.